

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-29. (Canceled).

30. (Currently Amended) A method for processing invoices, the method being performed by a computer and comprising:
- selecting, from a plurality of invoices, by the computer, a first set of invoices which are due within a specified time period and which have a balance larger than a first threshold value;
  - selecting, by the computer, from the first set of invoices, a second set of invoices for which a full payment of the respective balance has not been received;
  - associating, by the computer, a plurality of optional states with a selected invoice in the second set of invoices;
  - presenting the selected invoice with the plurality of optional states;
  - receiving a selection of a first state, among the plurality of optional states, for the selected invoice; ~~and~~
  - using the first state to control processing of the selected invoice; selecting, from said plurality of invoices, a fourth set of invoices having balances smaller than a second threshold value and larger than a third threshold value;
  - assigning a third state to the fourth set of invoices, the second threshold value being smaller than or equal to the first threshold value and the third threshold value being smaller than the second threshold value;
  - selecting, from said plurality of invoices, a fifth set of invoices having balances smaller than the third threshold value;
  - assigning a fourth state to the fifth set of invoices; and

presenting invoices having at least one of the first state, the second state,  
the third state, and the fourth state to a cash collector,  
wherein invoices having at least one of the first state or the second state  
are presented to the cash collector at the expiration of a first period  
of time before the due dates of the presented invoices.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, further comprising:  
selecting, from the plurality of invoices, a third set of invoices; and  
assigning a second state to the third set of invoices.
32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, comprising storing at least one of  
the first state and the second state as an entry into data fields of data records, the  
data records comprising data of the third set of invoices.
33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, comprising:  
storing at least one of the first and the second state as a first and second  
set of characters entered into one data field of a data record  
comprising data of the respective third set of invoices.
34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein one or more of the  
plurality of invoices are invoices of special importance.
35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, wherein said first state and  
second state are states of high priority.
36. (Canceled)
37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[36]]~~ 30, wherein the third state is a  
state of medium priority.

38. (Canceled)
39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[38]]~~ 30, wherein the fourth state is a state of low priority.
40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the first threshold value is selected such that a total balance of the first set of invoices is equal to a specified percentage of the outstanding active debts of a company that issues the invoices.
41. (Canceled)
42. (Canceled)
43. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[41]]~~ 30, further comprising presenting the invoices having the third state to the cash collector at the expiration of a second period of time before the due dates of the presented invoices.
44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[38]]~~ 30, further comprising presenting the invoices having the fourth state to the cash collector at the expiration of a third period of time before the due dates of the presented invoices.
45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[41]]~~ 30, further comprising:  
determining, by said cash collector, whether payments to the invoices  
having at least one of the first state and the second state have  
been made before, on, or after the due date; and,  
~~in case of~~ for invoices associated with a non-payment, presenting the  
non-payment invoices to a collecting service.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the second period of time is smaller than the first period of time and the third period of time is smaller than the second period of time.
47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[38]]~~ 30, further comprising dunning customers associated with the fifth set of invoices.
48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising presenting the non-payment invoices to one of a collection division of a company that issues the invoices or an external collecting agency.
49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising:  
checking whether a non-payment is reasoned; and  
in case the non-payment is not reasoned, presenting such non-payment invoice to an external collecting agency.
50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising presenting the non-payment invoices to the collecting service as a to-do-list.
51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, further comprising:  
receiving a request for a state change of a specified invoice from a customer; and  
changing a state of the specified invoice according to said request.
52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising presenting the request to an internal clearing division before changing the state.
53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the method is implemented as part of software for supporting business processes, the software comprising enterprise resource planning software.

54. (Currently Amended) A computer system for processing invoices, comprising:
- a memory having program instructions;
  - an input device for receiving and entering data;
  - a display device for displaying content;
  - a storage component for storing data; and
  - a processor configured to execute the program instructions to:
    - select, from a plurality of invoices, a first set of invoices which are due within a specified time period and which have a balance larger than a first threshold value;
    - select, from the first set of invoices, a second set of invoices for which a full payment of the respective balance has not been received;
    - associate, by the computer, a plurality of optional states with a selected invoice in the second set of invoices;
    - present the selected invoice with the plurality of optional states;
    - receive a selection of a first state, among the plurality of optional states, for the selected invoice; and
    - use the first state to control processing of the selected invoice;
    - select, from said plurality of invoices, a fourth set of invoices having balances smaller than a second threshold value and larger than a third threshold value;
    - assign a third state to the fourth set of invoices, the second threshold value being smaller than or equal to the first

threshold value and the third threshold value being  
smaller than the second threshold value;  
select, from said plurality of invoices, a fifth set of invoices  
having balances smaller than the third threshold  
value;  
assign a fourth state to the fifth set of invoices; and  
present invoices having at least one of the first state, the  
second state, the third state, and the fourth state to a  
cash collector,  
wherein invoices having at least one of the first state or the  
second state are presented to the cash collector at  
the expiration of a first period of time before the due  
dates of the presented invoices.

55. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer-readable storage-medium storing a computer program which, when executed by a processor, causes processor to perform a method for processing invoices, the method comprising:

selecting, from a plurality of invoices, a first set of invoices which are due within a specified time period and which have a balance larger than a first threshold value;

selecting, from the first set of invoices, a second set of invoices for which a full payment of the respective balance has not been received;

associating, by the computer, a plurality of optional states with a selected invoice in the second set of invoices;

presenting the selected invoice with the plurality of optional states;

receiving a selection of a first state, among the plurality of optional states, for the selected invoice; and—

using the first state to control processing of the selected invoice;\_

selecting, from said plurality of invoices, a fourth set of invoices having  
balances smaller than a second threshold value and larger than a  
third threshold value;  
assigning a third state to the fourth set of invoices, the second threshold  
value being smaller than or equal to the first threshold value and  
the third threshold value being smaller than the second threshold  
value;  
selecting, from said plurality of invoices, a fifth set of invoices having  
balances smaller than the third threshold value;  
assigning a fourth state to the fifth set of invoices; and  
presenting invoices having at least one of the first state, the second state,  
the third state, and the fourth state to a cash collector,  
wherein invoices having at least one of the first state or the second state  
are presented to the cash collector at the expiration of a first period  
of time before the due dates of the presented invoices.